

## CONCEIT

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*Lesson: I Samuel 17:32-51; Apocalypse Explained 700:20*

Have you ever seen somebody who is very proud of himself? He walks around holding his head up high, and he usually isn't very kind to other people. He acts as if he were a giant, and as if other people were just little dwarfs. Today we read about somebody who was very proud of himself and who was a real giant. His name was Goliath and he was one of the Philistines. He was over nine feet tall, and this was at a time when people normally didn't grow as tall as they do today.

Goliath came out of the Philistines' camp and challenged the Israelites to send a man to fight with him. The Israelites were too scared of him and did not send anyone to fight this proud Philistine giant. It wasn't surprising. Goliath was much larger than any of the Israelites. Even the head of Goliath's spear weighed about twenty pounds.

Then David, who came to the camp of the Israelites to visit his brothers, agreed to fight against Goliath. King Saul didn't want David to go because at that time David was just a lad. But David told Saul that he had already killed a lion and a bear while he was watching the sheep. David said that the Lord, who had saved him from both the lion and the bear, would also save him from Goliath.

The Lord indeed saved David from Goliath. David first went to a brook, and there he picked up five smooth stones. Taking his sling and these stones, he went out to meet the giant. Goliath thought this was a joke, but it wasn't a joke. Taking a stone, David used his sling to hurl it at Goliath and the stone sank into the giant's forehead, and he fell to the earth. The Lord had helped David defend himself against Goliath.

The Lord can defend you from a giant as well. You too, believe it or not, may be attacked by a giant. Now, it's not likely that you would be attacked by a large man over nine feet tall. But you can be attacked by a large evil, a giant evil. This evil is being very proud of yourself—being conceited. It is such an enormous evil that it is like a giant. If you suddenly realize that you are acting much too proud of yourself and decide to fight this sin, it is as if you were fighting a giant. It seems so difficult to stop being proud that you think you won't win. But just as the Lord helped David to fight Goliath, so too the Lord will help you fight against being conceited.

You must first ask the Lord to help you fight. This you do by praying to Him, which you should of course do every single day. Then you also need five smooth stones from the brook. The brook stands for the Lord's Word. The smooth stones stand for things the Lord teaches in His Word. Just as David went to the brook to get some smooth stones, so too you must go to the Word and read it so that you learn about some of the Lord's teachings. Just as David needed the stones to fight against Goliath, so too you will need to know the Lord's teachings to fight against being too proud. And the wonderful thing is that you don't need to know that much. David didn't need a great many stones to go against Goliath. He took only five stones. You don't need to know that much about the Lord's teachings to fight against being proud. You should learn as much as you can, but you shouldn't feel bad because there is still a lot you don't know. In fact, just one of the Lord's teachings can help you stop being proud and conceited.

Take for example the Lord's teaching that everything good comes from Him. Once you have learned this and thought about it and really believe it, you realize that all the good things you have come from the Lord. You don't have anything to be conceited about because what you have is from the Lord.

Suppose you are better at sports than one of your friends because you happen to have stronger muscles than he does. You shouldn't be conceited about this. You didn't make your muscles strong. The Lord did. Suppose a girl is prettier than one of her friends. She shouldn't be conceited either. It was the Lord who gave her a pretty face. What if you are better in school work than somebody else? There again, you shouldn't be conceited. The Lord gave you your mind, and perhaps your mind is stronger than some others.

If you are conceited about these things, you are not very different from Goliath, who was so proud because he was nine feet tall. You know what happened to Goliath!

*Amen.*

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